

WINOOSKI HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING

4:15 P.M.
December 20, 2023

Zoom
For link please call (802) 655 2360 by
noon of the scheduled meeting.

MINUTES

This agenda was tabled on November 15, 2023. See Addendum below for addition.

Present: Chair Potvin; Vice Chair Raymond; Commissioner Mace; Commissioner Owen
Officers: ED Decareau; Assistant ED Beaulieu

1. Public Comment

No Public Members Present

2. Approve Agenda – No Changes Proposed by Staff

No Changes

3. Approve Minutes of October 18, 2023

Motion to Approve by Commissioner Mace, Seconded by Commissioner Owen.

Motion carries 4 - 0

4. Second Quarter Finances

Question from Commissioner Mace – about whether vacancy savings is the only reason for budget performance. Decarreau noted that the vacancy savings was offset by the duplicate hiring. Decarreau also noted that results are delayed because the accountants are short staffed and struggling to keep up with work. Commissioner Mace noted that CCV funding is covering certificates and associates degree if we want to train our own staff.

5. Introduce Holly Lafreniere – Property Manager

Not present

6. Tenant Charges Policy – Discussion / Approval

Commissioner Mace requested clarifying the definition of damage (page 2 redline) and pointed out missing words on the top of page 3 (No charges ...) making sure that WHA is responsible for notifying tenant and providing assistance.

Motion to adopt the Tenant Charges Policy as amended by Commissioner Owen.
Seconded by Commissioner Mace.

Motion carries 4 - 0

7. Building Homes Together Report

Circulate the document to the Housing Commission and ask that it be sent to the Planning Commission prior to the joint meeting of the Housing and Planning Commission in February.

Commissioner Mace noted that she sent an email to the Mayor and City staff referring to a 2016 housing needs assessment. She noted that the conditions are getting worse. Commissioner Mace heard from the Mayor who met with her to clarify the contents of Commissioner Mace's email. She also noted that the school's census is now projected to decline drastically solely based on housing.

ED Decarreau reported that Bove's is closing down to build market rate smaller apartments. Commissioner Owen questioned whether the property will be developed in stages. The process is moving forward with reports that tenants are being pressured to leave outside of the legal obligations.

ED Decarreau also noted continuing discussions between the Mayor, CHT and the VT Guard on the armory building and conversations with various parties on the St. Stephen's property which is still held up in court.

Commissioner Mace encouraged WHA to move forward with the development at Elm Street. ED Decarreau is trying to find a partner to develop. Decarreau is also working with CHT to develop. Commissioner Mace suggested getting a consultant to help launch the project.

ED Decarreau also reported on the Training program in multiple languages on their rights. The participants were afraid to call the landlord for fear of getting evicted if they complain. Participants came with particular problems, and the issue of "standing up for rights" in a market that favors landlords is difficult. Landlords are simply raising rents above Section 8 limits.

Commissioner Mace also noted that the City of Winooski is continuing to lose 3+ bedroom apartments and this will continue until we build. She noted that USCRI is not settling refugees in Winooski due to the lack of housing and in many communities having to settle folks further away from jobs.

ED Decarreau reviewed the project list.

8. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn at 5:27 pm by Commissioner Owen. Seconded by Commissioner Mace.

Motion carries 4 - 0